THE

Moral and Religious Cabinet.

"To aid the cause of Virtue and Religion."

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STRIKING EVIDENCES OF THE DIVINITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I. EXAMPLES OF DYING INFIDELS.

"The wicked is driven away in his own wickedness" Prov. xiv. 32.
"With the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool." YOUNG.

MR. HOBBES was a celebrated infidel in the last age, who, in bravado, would sometimes speak very unbecoming things of God and his word. Yet, when alone, he was haunted with the most tormenting reflections, and would awake in great terror, if his candle happened but to go out in the night. He could never bear any discourse of death, and seemed to cast off all thoughts of it. He lived to be upwards of ninety. His last sensible words were, when he found he could live no longer, "I shall be glad then to find a hole to creep out of the world at. And notwithstanding all his high pretensions to learning and philosophy, his uneasiness constrained him to confess, when he drew near to the grave, that "he was about to take a leap in the dark."——The writings of this old sinner, ruined the earl of Rochester, and many other gentlemen of the first parts in the nation, as that nobleman himself declared, after his conversion.

2. The account which the celebrated Sully gives us of young Servin is out of the common way. The beginning of June, 1623, says he, I set out for Calais, where I was to embark, having with me a retinue of upwards of two hundred gentlemen, or who called themselves such, of whom a considerable number were really of the first distinction. Just before my departure, old Servin came and presented his son to me, and begged I would use my endeavours to make him a man of some worth and honesty; but he

confessed it was what he dared not hope, not through any want of understanding or capacity in the young man, but from his natural inclination to all kinds of vice. The old man was in the right: what he told me having excited my curiosity to gain a thorough knowledge of young Servin, I found him to be at once both a wonder and a monster; for I can give no other idea of that assemblage of the most excellent and pernicious qualities. Let the reader represent to himself a man of a genius so lively, and an understanding so extensive, as rendered him scarce ignorant of any thing that could be known; of so vast and ready a comprehension, that he immediately made himself master of what he attempted; and of so prodigious a memory, that he never forgot what he had once learned; he possessed all parts of philosophy and the mathematics, particularly fortification and drawing: even in theology he was so well skilled, that he was an excellent preacher whenever he had a mind to exert that talent, and an able disputant for and against the reformed religion indifferently; he not only understood Greek, Hebrew, and all the languages which we call learned, but also the different jargons or modern dialects! he accented and pronounced them so naturally, and so perfectly imitated the gestures and manners both of the several nations of Europe, and the particular provinces of France, that he might have been taken for a native of all or any of these countries; and this quality he applied to counterfeit all sorts of persons, wherein he succeeded wonderfully; he was, moreover, the best comedian and greatest droll that perhaps ever appeared; he had a genius for poetry, and had wrote many verses; he played upon almost all instruments, was a perfect master of music, and sung most agreeably and justly; he likewise could say mass; for he was of a disposition to do, as well as to know, all things: his body was perfectly well suited to his mind, he was light, nimble, dexterous, and fit for all exercises; he could ride well, and in dancing, wrestling, and leaping, he was admired: there are not any recreative games that he did not know; and he was skilled in almost all mechanic arts. But now for the reverse of the medal:

here it appeared that he was treacherous, cruel, cowardly, deceitful; a liar, a cheat, a drunkard and a glutton; a sharper in play, immersed in every species of vice, a blasphemer, an atheist; in a word, in him might be found all the vices contrary to nature, honour, religion, and society; the truth of which he evinced with his latest breath, for he died in the flower of his age, in a common brothel, perfectly corrupted by his debaucheries, and expired with a glass in his hand, cursing and denying God.

3. The Honourable Francis Newport was educated by his parents in a religious manner. As he grew up to years of discretion, he fell into the hands of infidels, lost all his religion, and commenced infidel himself. Being some time after seized with sickness, his serious convictions returned, and he became alarmed for the safety of his condition. After enduring the most horrid agonies of mind possible, till, in a very short time, his bodily strength was exhausted; with a groan so dreadful and loud, as though it had been more than human, he cried out, Oh the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation! and expired.

It may much be questioned, whether a more affecting narrative was ever composed in any language, than the true history of this unhappy gentleman's last sickness and death. It is greatly to be desired that men of all denominations would give it a serious perusal.

4. Mr. William Emmerson was at the same time an infidel, and one of the first mathematicians of the age. Though, in some respects, he might be considered as a worthy man, his conduct through life was rude, vulgar, and frequently immoral. He paid no attention to religious duties, and both intoxication and profane language were familiar to him. Towards the close of his days, being afflicted with the stone, he would crawl about the floor on his hands and knees, sometimes praying, and sometimes swearing, as the humour took him. What a poor creature is man without religion! Sir Isaac Newton died of the same disorder, which was

attended, at times, with such severe paroxisms, as forced out large drops of sweat that ran down his face. In these trying circumstances, however, he was never observed to utter the smallest complaint, or to express the least impatience. What a striking contrast between the conduct of the infidel and the christian!

5. Monsieur Voltaire, during a long life, was continually treating the holy scriptures with contempt, and endeavouring to spread the poison of infidelity among the nations. See, however, the end of such a conduct. In his last illness he sent for Dr. Tronchin. When the doctor came, he found Voltaire in the greatest agonies, exclaiming with the utmost horror—I am abandoned by God and man. He then said, Doctor, I will give you half of what I am worth, if you can give me six months life. The doctor answered, Sir you cannot live six weeks. Voltaire replied, Then I shall go to hell, and then you will go with me! and soon after expired.

This is the hero of modern infidels! Dare any of them say—Let me die the death of Voltaire, and let my last end be like his? Wonderful infatuation! He occupies the first niche in the French pantheon! That he was a man of great and various talents, none can deny: but his want of sound learning, and moral qualifications, will ever prevent him from being ranked among the benefactors of mankind, by the wise and good. Such an hero, indeed, is b fitting a nation under judicial infatuation, to answer the wise ends of the Governor of the world. If the reader has felt himself injured by the poison of this man's writings, he may find relief for his wounded mind, by carefully perusing Findlay's Vindication of the Sacred Books from the Misrepresentations and Cavils of Voltaire; and Lefan's Letters of certain Jews to Voltaire. The hoary infidel cuts but a sorry figure in the hands of these sons of Abraham.

6. The last days of David Hume, that celebrated deist, were spent in playing at whist, in cracking his jokes about Charon and

his boat, and in reading Lucian and other entertaining books.—This is a *consummatum est* worthy of a clever fellow, whose conscience was seared as with a hot iron! Dr. Johnson observes on this impenitent death-bed scene—"Hume owned he had never read the New Testament with attention. Here then was a man who had been at no pains to enquire into the truth of religion, and had continually turned his mind the other way. It was not to be expected that the prospect of death should alter his way of thinking, unless God should send an angel to set him right. He had a vanity in being thought easy." Dives fared sumptuously every day, and saw no danger: but, the next thing we hear of him is—In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments!

7. The sad evening before the death of the noble Altamont, upon the striking of the clock, he cried out, "Oh time! time! it is fit thou shouldst strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou fled for ever! A month!—Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for the much I have to do! —Oh! thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent, Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown!" Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont, expired.

8. The gentleman of fortune described by Mr. Hervey in his admonitory letter to Richard Nash, esq; Master of the ceremonies at Bath, is an instance of a penitential sorrow of a very impressive kind. Before his last sickness, he was a man of the most robust body, and of the gayest temper that can be imagined. All his vigour and hilarity, however, were gone, when Hervey waited upon him, and he was near the time of his dissolution.—"Oh!" said he, with a look strongly impressive of the anguish of his mind, "that I had been wise, that I had known this, that I had considered my latter end! If God would restore me to health again, I call heaven and earth to witness, I would labour for holiness, as I shall

soon labour for life. I would gladly part with all my estate, large as it is, or a world to obtain it. Now my benighted eyes are enlightened, I clearly discern the things that are excellent. As for riches, and pleasures, and the applauses of men, I account them as dross and dung, no more to my happiness than the feathers that lie on the floor. Oh! if the righteous Judge would try me once more, every opportunity of spiritual improvement should be dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver! But, alas! the day in which I should have worked is over and gone, and I see a sad, horrible night approaching, bringing with it the blackness of darkness for ever. I shall be ruined, undone, and destroyed with an everlasting destruction!

These eight examples are such as give but little encouragement to any person, who has a proper concern for his own welfare, to embark, either in the atheistic or deistic schemes. In those cases where the conscience was awake, the unhappy men were filled with anguish and amazement inexpressible. And in those other cases, where conscience seemed to be asleep, there appears nothing enviable in their situation, even upon their own supposition, that there is no after-reckoning. If to die like an ass is a privilege, I give them the joy of it! much good may it do them! May I die like a Christian, having a hope blooming with immortal expectations!

(To be continued.)

ON PRIVATE PRAYER.

IN the petitionary part of Prayer, we desire either the bestowing of some good thing, or the preventing or removing of some evil: And in the gratulatory part of Prayer, we return the praise of what we received from God, to God. Though the thanksgiving part of prayer be most neglected, yet the petitionary part is too little regarded, or slightly passed over. It is Ungodliness to go about any business, or journey, to fix our abode, to use any food, or physic, without asking GOD'S leave and blessing in prayer. A neglect of this Duty is a branch of Atheism. Is

it not a just cause of lamentation that so many should be guilty of such ungodliness? This sin manifests high contempt of GOD; it is a demonstration that GOD is not in all their thoughts. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no GOD:" "He calleth not upon GOD."

To live without Prayer, is to be dead while we live; for it is to live without GOD. The families that know not GOD, and those that call not upon his Name, are the same. What can we do less for GOD, than by this homage to own him for our Maker? Or less for our own souls, than to beg our lives of Him, whose hand of Justice is lifted up against us. Their souls and their's only, shall live, that seek the LORD. No Malefactors die less lamented, than those that when cast, will not beg for their lives.

Many, when they have prayed themselves out of affliction, have no more to say to GOD, till they are again sinking in deep waters. And when they have, for some time, prayed for deliverance to no purpose, they are ready to cry out, in the spirit of impatience, "This evil is of the LORD; why should we wait for him any longer?"—This is worse, than not to pray at all. Intirely to omit Prayer, denotes, indeed, the neglect of duty; but to cast off Prayer, intimates, a distate and aversion to duty.

The Prayer of Faith, is the only Key to unlock the storehouses and treasures of all Blessings, yet how little has this Key been used?—To instance only in secret prayer. When we are in the midst of worldly business and company, how necessary it is to raise up our thoughts to GOD, to give him a visit, though a short one, in a desire or two; to speak, at least, one or two Heart-words unto him? Too many content themselves with their solemn visits to the Throne of Grace, and in the intervals of Duty scarce ever converse with GOD. What account shall we be able to give of our thoughts (the first-born of our souls) from morning to evening? Is not this the highest improvement of them, to send them in embassies unto Heaven, and by them to converse with God? How

many precious things, in christian conversation, in sermons, and in social worship, are lost, for want of present lifting up our hearts to GOD, for his Blessing thereupon? How many motions of the Holy Spirit are quenched through this sinful neglect? There is much unkindness in it; especially when we consider, that GOD is so gracious, that he lets his Door stand wide open at all times, and that he assures us of a welcome: Certainly it must grieve him, that we will not so much as step in with a Desire, hour after hour, though we may thus visit Him, without neglecting any business we have in hand, or behaving uncivil to any company.

How few make a Conscience of Closet-Prayer? Though Christ takes it for granted, that his disciples will thus pray, and has annexed a gracious promise to the due performance of this Duty, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father, who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret, will reward thee openly." Retire thyself, get thee a place, set thyself a time, wherein thou mayest make it thy business to pray unto GOD. Alas, how Satan prevails with some to put off this duty from time to time, by telling them, that they will but play the hypocrite, or that the season is not convenient, or that this and the other worldly business must be first dispatched. O how little do such love GOD, who are afraid to talk too often in secret with him? Some satisfy themselves with praying with others, either in public, or in the family. But how can they look upon themselves as Christians, whatever profession they make? What! a Christian, and yet never desire any privacy between GOD and thy own soul? A Christian, and yet find no errand to invite thee to speak with GOD alone? Sure thou rather seekest to approve thyself to men, than to GOD. The true Lover delights to visit his Friend, when he may find him alone; like that good man, who, when the set time for closet prayer was come, would break from any company he was in, with these words, "*I have a Friend that stays for me: Farewell.*" Others put off this duty, by pretending they pray always; every hour they are

lifting up their hearts in ejaculations to Heaven. As the pretence of every Day-Sabbath, comes just to no Sabbath at all; so the continual prayer of some, comes to no praying at all.

Ejaculatory Prayer should not hinder, but rather fit us for solemn set prayer. Fire must be kept upon the Altar continually, but that must not hinder the morning and evening Sacrifice. True Christians cannot be satisfied with a bit and away, but they must have their set meals. Others look upon closet prayer to be but a Free-will offering (as they term it) which they may offer if they please, but will not own it to be a Duty. Surely they are but little sensible of their own heart-plagues, or foolishly flatter themselves that Death is to cleanse them from all their inward corruptions; otherwise, they would be oftener with GOD in secret, and more importunately plead with him for the accomplishment of all his great and precious promises. Through the course of my experience, I have observed, that the fall of professors began in their closet neglects, either by omitting the duty totally, or by a careless, formal, customary management of it. This is the first step towards apostacy. Backsliders grow first out of acquaintance with GOD in secret, then delight in the duty declineth by little and little, then they are less frequent in their visits, upon which follows a casting off the duty: notwithstanding they may appear great zealots in public ordinances, yet if they do not repent, and perform their first works, they will soon be destitute both of the Form and Power of Religion.

A hundred things may combine to keep us in the exercise of public duties. But here is the trial of our uprightness, what we do in secret for GOD, and with God. Scipio tells us, "I have never better company than when I have no company; for then I can freely entertain my own thoughts, and converse with all the learned that have been in former ages." But we are called to greater honour, to improve our solitude in conversing with GOD.

Few observe the fittest time for private Prayer. GOD would have us, in this sense, watch unto prayer: GOD requires us early to tell the world whose servants we are, and that we dare not undertake any busines without first engaging GOD with us:—That we dare not enter on Satan's territories, without Christ, our great champion with us. A true christian no sooner opens his eyes in the morning, but he opens his heart to the LORD. He expects no good that day, unless it be begun with a good duty; and therefore says, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning: In the morning early will I direct my prayer unto thee." But if we venture into the World, before we have got an antidote against its infection, the consequences too frequently are, deadness of heart, and a multitude of worldly distractions. And when we enter into our closet, we are beset with wandering, discontented thoughts; so that the time which should be spent in communion with GOD, is taken up in driving away these fowls from the Sacrifice.

Let it also be remembered, that GOD is an holy God, and jealous of his Name; and he justly considers it as a dishonour done unto himself, to be so neglected, that he must be served last of all, and therefore withholds his influences from the soul. By neglect of early prayer, we honour the World too much, as if it were more worthy of our time and strength than the LORD is: Whereas we should profess, that all our hours are GOD'S and therefore we dare not but honour him with the First-fruits of all our increase; we shall thereby sanctify all the harvest, by presenting GOD with the green ears.

The morning is the fittest season for devotion, for then the mercies of the night smell sweetest, which after awhile, like flowers, will lose their scent with us; Whilst the iron is hot, it is our business to strike: His mercies are renewed every morning, so should our praises.

By entering on business without calling on God, we in effect declare that we need not his assistance, and that we can make a

shift without him. Whereas God feeds us from hand to mouth, and hath left no stores with us, that we may make our address to him night and day, who must water us every moment. Did we but see the dangers we are every moment exposed to from the three-fold armies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, we should not be so fool-hardy as to venture abroad, without first imploring and obtaining the divine presence and blessing. Let us remember, we want as soon as we awake; and want even those things which none but God can supply.

By neglecting the proper time for prayer, the Devil and the World often make us forget, or omit the duty for the day. We pretend, that we have no leisure in the morning; and the enemy takes care to fill the hand with unexpected business, so that the excuse grows stronger, and more plausible: But must we serve the slave, and neglect the Lord of Glory? O what hazards do we run, not only by preferring other things and business before GOD, but by neglecting the first hour of the day, when we are not sure of a second? For what is our life but a vapour, which may disappear in a moment!

A SERMOM,

Preached by an old Minister to three Highwaymen.

FOUR gentlemen and an old minister, riding along the road, met three highwaymen, who dismounting, plundered them; the old minister begged very hard to have a little money, as he was going to pay a bill in London; so they, being generous fellows, gave him all his money back again, on condition of his preaching them a sermon: so taking them off the highway, he said,

Gentlemen,

YOU are the most like the old apostles of any men in the world, for they were wanderers upon the earth, and so are you: they had neither lands nor tenements that they could call their

own; neither, as I presume, have you. They were despised of all, but those of their own profession, and so, I believe are you; they were unalterably fixed in the principles they professed, and I dare swear so are you: they were often hurried into gaols and prisons; were persecuted by the people, and endured great hardships; all of which sufferings, I presume, have been undergone by you: their profession brought them all to untimely deaths; and, if you continue in your course, so will yours bring you. But in this point, beloved, you differ mightily, for the apostles ascended from the tree into heaven, where, I am afraid, you will never come; but as their deaths were compensated with eternal glory, yours will be rewarded with eternal shame and misery, unless you mend your manners.

The following is extracted from a Sermon of Saurin's, which was delivered on a New-Year's Day.

LET me suppose that the present solemnity has drawn together 1800 persons, I subdivide these 1800 into six different classes. The 1st. consisting of persons from 10 to 20 years of age, amounting to - - - - - 530

2d	from 20 to 30	amounting to 440
3d	—— 30 to 40	- - - 345
4th	—— 40 to 50	- - - 255
5th	—— 50 to 60	- - - 160
6th	—— 60 and upwards	- - 70
		1800

According to the most exact calculations, of those who have made such kind of researches their study, each of these classes must, in the course of this year, present to death a tribute of 10 persons. On this computation, 60 of my present hearers must,

before the beginning of another year, be numbered with the dead. Conformably to the same rate of computation, in ten years, of the 1800 now present, there will remain 1270

In 20 years - - - -	830
In 30 —— - - - -	480
In 40 —— - - - -	230
In 50 years no more will be left than	70

Thus you see, my brethren, in what a perpetual flux the human race is. The world is a vast theatre, in which every one appears his moment upon the stage, and in a moment disappears. Every successive instant presents different scenery, a new decoration. I represent these vicissitudes to myself under the emblem of what is felt by a man, who is employed in turning over the pages of history. He pores over his book, he beholds on this leaf one people, one king: he turns it, and lo, other laws, other maxims, other actors, which have no manner of relation to what preceded them?

"THE aggregate population on the surface of the known habitable globe is estimated at 895,300,000 souls. If we reckon with the ancients, that a generation lasts thirty years, then in that space 895,300,000 human beings will be born and die; consequently 81,760 must be dropping into eternity every day—3,407 every hour, or about 56 every minute! How awful is the reflection?"

Reader, is it not the most dreadful infatuation to trifle with eternal things, on the brink of that awful world, into which more than

"A thousand wretched dying souls have fled
"Since the last setting sun!"

Thou art yet in the number of the "living, who know that they shall die." Oh may it be thy concern and mine, so to

"number our days, that we may apply our hearts to that wisdom," which makes men "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

OF SPIRITUAL NEGLIGENCE.

THERE are many who, at their first conversion, are pious and humble; but are afterwards perverse and rebellious. At first they appear to be full of the fear of the Lord, and of devotion, and to possess a contrite and silent heart; but after this they become careless and dissolute, talkative and unguarded in their lives; and they who at first did restrain their very thoughts, do hardly take care afterwards of words, or even of deeds; and thus by little and little, every evil, not guarded against in the beginning, groweth still from worse to worse.

Who therefore ought not to fear and use circumspection, since there are so many unhappy accidents which befal the best and the most modest? The duty therefore of all men is to fear, and so to fear as yet to hope for the best; and so to hope, as neither on one hand to presume rashly, nor on the other, through vain confidence, to grow sluggish and inactive.

Poetry.

TO THE HOLY GHOST.

(Concluded from page 12.)

PART THE THIRD.

THOU art the end of doubtful care,
The antidote of sad despair,
We feel in that sweet power of thine;
Through thee, who lifts the fallen up,
We rise, rejoice, abound in hope,
And bless thine energy divine.

Author of never-failing peace,
Whene'er we languish in distress,
O'erwhelm'd with sin and misery,
Thy presence brings us sure relief,
To gladness turns our every grief;
And joy in God, is joy in thee.

Spirit of meek and godly fear,
The children taught of thee revere,
And do their heavenly Father's will;
Pierc'd with an humble filial awe,
They love to keep his blessed law,
And all his kind commands fulfil.

Spirit of pure and holy love,
We feel thee streaming from above,
In calm unutterable peace;
Thy love by thee diffus'd abroad
Unites our happy hearts to God,
And seals our everlasting bliss.

PART THE FOURTH.

SPIRIT of holiness and root,
Thy gracious God-delighting fruit,
Is joy, fidelity, and peace,
Meekness which no affront can move,
Truth, temperance, long-suffering, love,
And universal righteousness.

Restorer of the sin-sick mind,
Our souls a perfect soundness find,
Through all their powers in thee renew'd;
Spirit of life and might divine,
By thee we in thy image shine,
In all the strength and life of God.

Thou dost the living power exert
To invigorate and confirm the heart
Of those who feel thy work begun;

To exercise our every grace
Quicken us in the glorious race,
Till all the glorious race is run.

Through thee the flesh we mortify,
A daily death rejoice to die,
To live from sin for ever free;
An holy spotless life to lead,
Is only in thy track to tread,
To walk in love, in God, in thee.

PART THE FIFTH.

THROUGH thee we render God his due,
The worship spiritual and true
With loving hearts rejoice to pay;
Him, while we find thy present power,
In truth and spirit we adore,
And pray—whene'er in thee we pray.

Thou pleadest in the living stones
With speechless eloquence of groans,
Which pierce our pitying Father's ear;
The answer of thy prayer we feel,
The glorious joy unspeakable,
And triumph in the Comforter.

True witness of our sonship thee
We feel, from fear, and sorrow free,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry;
Seal of our endless bliss thou art,
Foretaste, and earnest in our heart,
Of pleasure that shall never die.

First fruits of yonder land above,
Celestial joy, seraphic love
To us, to us in thee is given;
And all that to the spirit sow,
Shall of the spirit reap, and know
The ripest happiness of heaven.